

VZCZCXYZ0000  
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHIN #2982/01 2412344  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 292344Z AUG 06  
FM AIT TAIPEI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1862  
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5597  
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 6800

UNCLAS AIT TAIPEI 002982

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/TC, EAP/PA, EAP/PD - DAVID FIRESTEIN  
DEPARTMENT PASS AIT/WASHINGTON

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: CAMPAIGN TO OUST PRESIDENT CHEN SHUI-BIAN

¶1. Summary: Former DPP Chairman Shih Ming-teh's formal announcement Monday that the sit-in rally to oust President Chen Shui-bian will kick off September 9 stayed in the Taiwan's media spotlight August

¶29. News coverage also focused on the possibility of a visit by China's Taiwan Affairs Office Director Chen Yunlin in October. Several papers carried on inside pages the results of a latest DPP survey, which showed that even though 77.5 percent of those polled believe the campaign to oust President Chen will not succeed, 47.2 percent said they still support the campaign. The same poll also found that only 12 percent of respondents said they will join the sit-in rally, while 88 percent said they will not.

¶2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, an editorial in the pro-independence "Liberty Times," Taiwan's biggest daily, criticized Shih's moves to oust President Chen, saying it will only divide and disturb Taiwan society. An analysis in the pro-unification "United Daily News" said in the battle between Shih and Chen, KMT Chairman Ma Ying-jeou is in the least favorable position. But the article also pointed out that the KMT, which holds a majority of seats in the Legislative Yuan, will be the one that can really solve problems within the system. With regard to U.S.-China-Taiwan relations, an opinion piece in the limited-circulation, pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" said "It is high time the U.S. pays attention to Asia, so government officials do not inadvertently advance the interests of another nation at the expense of the U.S." End summary.

¶3. Movements to Oust President Chen Shui-bian"

A) "Movement to Oust Bian Outside the System Will Split and Disturb Society"

The pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 600,000] editorialized (8/29):

"... Evidently the sit-in campaign to oust Bian, which was initiated by Shih Ming-teh and is strongly supported by the pan-Blue camp, is just part of the struggle to oust Bian. The struggle to oust him within the system, as claimed by the oust-Bian forces, also includes moves to impeach or recall the president, or even to cast a no-confidence vote on the Cabinet, all of which are part of a conceived strategy. In other words, the oust-Bian forces want to mobilize people from within and outside the system 'until A-Bian steps down.' Such a plan will make this serial even more severe.  
...

"A sit-in is a democratic right of the people, but whether it is legitimate to exercise such a right must depend on whether the issue which people address is appropriate or not. The call for A-Bian to step down should hinge on whether the evidence is sufficient enough

to judge [Chen's] rights and wrongs. Should it really prove that President Chen is involved in irregularities, those who support him must not back him blindly. But judged by the current situation, it is still insufficiently legitimate to replace the judiciary system or democracy with pressure exerted outside the system, and to thereby create emotional confrontation between those who support Bian and those who oppose him, a move that will surely split and disturb society. ..."

B) "It is Ma Who Will Have to Catch the Ball in the Bian-Shih Confrontation"

Journalist Lo Hsiao-ho noted in an analysis in the pro-unification "United Daily News" [circulation: 400,000] (8/29):

"... In this battle between Bian and Shih, Bian has the support of Green stalwarts and the protection of his presidency, and will not easily back down. Shih, who has undergone numerous battles, will not be willing to leave the field without achieving anything, either; the many reforms of the political system will likely become secondary objectives that he wants to achieve. In this battle, Ma Ying-jeou is in the least favorable position. Problems like social order, political stability, or how to tackle the mounting public voices calling for Bian's ouster will put Ma in a straitened circumstance; and he may be hurt severely if he fails to handle it carefully. ..."

"All people in Taiwan know that Bian will not step down; a revolutionary as smart as Shih must also know it clearly. Even though he has not abandoned his goal to oust Bian, there are naturally many political possibilities [facing him]. Shih has no soldiers in the political arena, and the KMT, which holds a majority of seats in the Legislative Yuan, is the one which is really able to solve problems within the system. [If Shih's campaign fails] the overwhelming public sentiment will likely rush forward to the KMT. The KMT should ponder on how to deal with such a powerful political current. ..."

#### 14. U.S.-China-Taiwan Relations

"Wishy-washy Policy Hurts the US"

Li Thian-hok, a commentator based in Pennsylvania, opined in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] (8/29):

"... The Bush administration pays insufficient attention to developments in Taiwan or China and the US is preoccupied with problems in the Middle East. It does not have a clear policy on Taiwan's future as part of a comprehensive, long-term strategic vision of the US role in Asia. US policy toward China and Taiwan is adrift, focusing on short-term goals and superficial, mundane affairs. There is little consensus as to what policy will serve US national interests. Asia will most likely prove to be the most important region for US security in this century because of the rapid rise of authoritarian China and the lack of an effective multilateral security arrangement in this region. It is high time the US paid attention to Asia so government officials do not inadvertently advance the interests of another nation at the expense of the US. ..."

YOUNG